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MARKETING A NATIONALLY ADVERTISED PRODUCT

By O. C. HARN

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Marketing a Nationally Advertised Product

By

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O. C. HARN

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O. C. Harn, advertising manager of the National Lead Company, was born in Dayton, Ohio. He was educated in Ohio Wesleyan and Cornell universities. From the latter institution he was graduated in 1894.

His first business experience was as clerk in a book store before he entered college. Upon graduation Mr. Harn became a reporter on the Cleveland *Leader*. From the *Leader* he went to the Cleveland *Press* as telegraph editor. After that he was successively editor of the *Interstate Architect and Builder* and of the *Inland Grocer*.

At one time advertising manager of H. J. Heinz Company, Mr. Harn has, since 1905, been identified with the advertising activities of the National Lead Company.

He was one of the organizers of the Association of National Advertising Managers, and was its second president. He was also for two terms president of the Technical Publicity Association and more recently was elected chairman of the National Advertising Commission—an important body representative of all the advertising interests of the country.

As advertising manager and chairman of the sales committee of the National Lead Company, Mr. Harn is well known in the paint trade. He originated the now familiar "Dutch-Boy" Painter trade-mark.

NOTE:—This Lecture, which is based upon the author's ripe experience in his special field, should be read in the light of the Modern Business Text, and should be studied as an authoritative message from the field of present-day business activity.

Marketing a Nationally Advertised Product

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The manufacturer who is considering national advertising is pre-supposed to have two things: a product which is nationally usable, and a financial and manufacturing capacity to supply a national demand.

Such a manufacturer has just three methods of distribution open to him, of which he may use one or more. He may sell exclusively thru jobbers, exclusively thru retailers, exclusively to consumers, or he may combine two or more of these methods.

It is not within the scope of a short discussion to consider each of these methods exhaustively; but certain observations should be made which will show the relationships which exist in the process of marketing a nationally advertised product.

Undoubtedly the tendency of the time is to get away from middlemen just as far and just as rapidly as can be done *advantageously*. In that last word lies the justification for all the different views and practices which we find at the present time.

The jobber and retailer exist because they are

needed, but just as soon as any concern learns that it can do better without either or both, the middlemen cease to exist for that house.

Whether or not goods shall be marketed thru jobbers or retailers, or both, depends oftentimes on one set of conditions at one period of a concern's career, and on an entirely different set of conditions at a later time. The launching of an advertising campaign has often led to a change in the distribution policy of a company. Such a change has not always been in the direction of eliminating the middlemen; on the contrary, successful advertising more often changes a house from an exclusively mail-order institution to a thru-the-trade concern.

By far the vast majority of manufacturers make use of both jobbers and retailers. Some sell to consumers direct by means of salesmen, such as subscription-book publishers, typewriter manufacturers and the makers of small specialties. Only a few sell by mail, and still fewer sell exclusively by that method. The great bulk of mail-order business is done by mercantile houses which are not manufacturers, but merely great retailers. Some of these, like the Sears-Roebuck Company, are retailers by mail exclusively; others, like John Wanamaker and Marshall Field retail both by mail and thru retail stores.

The important instances of selling direct to the consumer by means of salesmen are those in which the article or its utility are so little understood that it is desirable to have a trained salesman to explain it to each possible buyer. The automobile, typewriter,

and adding-machine are good examples of the sort of product meant.

There are many successful concerns, however, that sell simple articles, such as stereoscopes, toilet and kitchen conveniences, thru door-to-door canvassing. They take advantage of the fact that there are people who will not *buy* on their own initiative. Things must be *sold* to them. The retail storekeeper does not exercise a very intensive order of salesmanship. He has too many things to sell. He cannot be expert on all. The canvasser, therefore, sells the same things which might be obtained in the store, but he sells so many more of them that the extra selling expense is easily met.

The manufacturer who decides to retail his product direct by mail to the consumer without the intervention of either dealer or salesman, finds certain advantages awaiting him, among which the most important are: whatever business he gains, he owns without fear of the fickle favor of middlemen; likewise no salesman owns any part of his trade; he is in direct touch with his customers, and he cannot be misrepresented; as a general thing he has no credit problems or risks; his accounting burden is small; he is free from the expense and supervision of a traveling sales force.

On the other hand, there are offsets for all the advantages named. Thus, while it is true that the mail-order manufacturer is in no fear of the adverse influence of the middleman, he is, by the same token, without the middleman's influence and accessibility.

Where one person will send an order by mail, there are dozens who prefer the convenience of their community store. So also the salesman, who, altho he may under certain circumstances take business to a competitor, is, under normal conditions, a great business-getter. If the mail-order manufacturer has no credit problems, he also misses much of the expansion of business attendant upon those forces which necessitate a credit risk. In many lines the loss thru bad debts is kept down to less than one-half of one per cent, and in most the risks are probably no greater than the promise of gain justifies. If, then, marketing thru middlemen can greatly expand a business, the credit risk need not deter one.

As to the expense of maintaining a corps of salesmen, it may be said that the goods must be sold somehow. The mail-order house has no men on the road, it is true, but it has expensive advertising to pay for and costly literature and samples to distribute. A few salesmen can place the goods on sale in the stores where people can examine them and buy them, but the mail-order man must send a sample, or a picture of the article itself to every prospective customer, and this costs money as surely as does a sales force. Moreover, where the goods are sold to middlemen, the latter carry at least a part of the stock which in a mail-order business must ordinarily be carried entirely by the manufacturer.

It will be seen, therefore, that the case is not wholly one-sided and that the decision rests delicately upon the weight of evidence in each individual instance.

Not infrequently a manufacturer begins marketing by mail, or thru canvassers, not of deliberate choice, but because he feels that he can "break into the game" in no other way. Dealers are indifferent or even hostile to his proposition. He believes that if he is to get at the consumer, he must do it direct, either by door-to-door canvassing or by mail.

Sometimes a business started thus remains a mail-order business after it has grown; sometimes the advantages of the retail channel are so alluring that the mail-order man avails himself of them as soon as he can command them. The Ostermoor mattress business is a case in point. For a long time its business was practically all mail-order, but along with a great reputation came a demand from retailers for the goods, to which the manufacturer finally yielded. The business immediately expanded greatly and is now being successfully promoted in both ways.

In most cases, I should say, a manufacturer starting to market his own output will find selling thru the trade the most satisfactory method. It is true, as stated before, that mail-order and canvassing methods often begin thru the hostility of the trade to the new proposition, but this hostile attitude is more often successfully overcome by creating a demand upon the dealer.

Demand and Distribution

Now I run plumb against that old, old question: Which should an advertising manufacturer secure first, demand or distribution? It is the commercial

version of the quite-as-ancient popular conundrum: Which existed first, the hen or the egg?

As a matter of fact, demand and distribution should proceed, as nearly as possible, abreast. To start a big advertising campaign and create a great demand upon the trade, without having any goods in the dealer's hands to meet it, may make a deep impression on the dealer, but is likely to produce a decidedly bad impression upon the disappointed consumer. That may prove unfortunate, for it is difficult to arouse interest later when the dealers are supplied. Besides, a big advertising expenditure with no return is a discouraging load to carry. At the same time pressure from the consumer, either actual or confidently anticipated, is the only real motive the dealer feels for putting an article in stock.

A better plan, if dealers will not stock up in advance (and they usually will not, owing to the great number of brands they already carry and on account of the many false alarms of great advertising campaigns which never get beyond the pretty prospectus stage), is to work hard on one dealer in each community and get him started. This can almost always be done, altho the one secured may not be the leading merchant. Then start an advertising campaign to back up these few dealers, and advance as rapidly as circumstances permit to a broader distribution.

Among the methods used to induce an indifferent dealer to stock a new article may be mentioned the following: Making free demonstrations in the store; canvassing the homes in the interest of the dealer,

filling the orders thru his store; offering out-of-the-ordinary business helps that will appeal to the dealer; giving extra margins which may be withdrawn if necessary when the article is sufficiently established; placing goods on consignment (a method objectionable on account of the big investment required, but sometimes the only practical way). Dealers frequently take on a new line because they are displeased with old manufacturers or dissatisfied with established lines.

If the article is of enough importance so that the buyer will seek for it, the one dealer may be made an exclusive agent permanently. Thus automobiles, pianos, ready-made clothing, furniture and other products, the unit of sale of which is large, we generally find in the hands of exclusive agencies. If the article involves slight expenditure, and especially if it is purchased very frequently, such as food products, toilet trifles and small articles of clothing, it is generally placed in as many stores as possible.

Of course, there are many articles of small sale unit which are sold thru exclusive agencies, for example, Knox and Dunlap hats, Munsing underwear, and a still greater number of articles that appeal to women (because women will shop for things more than men will). But the tendency always is to widen distribution. One dealer is better than none at the start, and even for a long while, one good, live, pushing agent may be better than several indifferent dealers.

But for all products, except perhaps those which by reason of their nature demand the specialist or

expert as an agent, there nearly always comes a day when the business will be at a standstill in the community unless the consumers are more conveniently served than any one dealer, no matter how good, can serve them. Then it is time to abandon the exclusive agency. And it is interesting to note that when that day comes it is just as much to the interest of the former exclusive agency as to the manufacturer to abandon the one-dealer system.

One of the most recent and interesting instances of a concern's coming to this point is that of the Mark Cross Company, the well-known leather goods house. Mr. F. T. Murphy, treasurer, stated in *Advertising and Selling*, March, 1914, that the company had abandoned the exclusive agency in four-fifths of the towns, and in *every case* the former exclusive agent was now selling more Cross goods than before.

The exclusive retail agency is not the ideal distributing medium as a permanent thing for the average merchandise. The objections may be briefly stated as three, viz.: first, no one dealer, except in the smallest community, can reach all the people; second, dealers who have not your goods are influenced against you; and third, it is not well to place the future of one's business at the tender mercy of any one outsider. It may be observed, in connection with the last, that a dealer may fail to do all for the manufacturer in a community that might be done, for several reasons: the dealer may cease to grow with his community; or he may get into financial trouble. He may get into a rut as far as your line is

concerned because of the security he feels in his exclusive rights; he may become disgruntled; and he may demand more and more concessions with no corresponding increase in results for you.

So, after gaining a foothold in a community, it depends largely upon the nature of our product and the buying habit connected therewith, whether or not we shall make use of our consumer-advertising to influence other dealers rapidly to take up our line or aim only to send increasing numbers of consumers to the agency already established.

The Jobber's Place

And now the jobber question enters. Shall we deal directly with the retailer or sell him thru the jobber only? This is a decidedly live question, not only with the newcomer in the field, but with the house that has been established for years.

Indeed, the question is more apt to be a pertinent one with the latter than with the former, because in perhaps a majority of cases the beginner is forced by the weakness of his resources to rely upon the jobber at first. But when a concern has grown strong and when it can, with cool calculation, compare costs and results, the right of the jobber to exist in that house's scheme of things is likely to be questioned.

The sales manager of a large chocolate and cocoa business once said to me: "We are getting mighty tired of paying the jobbers fifteen per cent and then being compelled to canvass every one of these jobbers' retail customers in order to get the business. In a

great many cases the jobber does not even warehouse the goods. They are shipped direct to the retailer on the jobber's account."

I do not know whether this particular manufacturer has broken away from the jobber or not, but I know many who have done so because they rebelled against the conditions of which the chocolate maker complained.

The attitude indicated by these manufacturers is characteristic of modern merchandising. It is quite different from old-time commercial practice. Then the manufacturer sold to the agent or jobber and washed his hands of all further responsibility and interest in it. Today the manufacturer feels that he is not quit of the job until the consumer has the goods —and likes them. It is not the one sale that he is after, but an established demand from the court of last resort, the user.

To leave the retailer to learn of his product thru the uncertain efforts of a jobber who has a myriad of things to sell and so fights for none, is not to the taste of the eager manufacturer these days. Neither is it in his blood to let the consumer depend on an indifferent retailer for his knowledge of the goods.

But there is this difference in the practical steps he takes. The consumer is, as a rule, too numerous to be canvassed individually, so he advertises to him and does his best to stimulate the retailer into a certain amount of interest by the demand created.

But if the retailer appears to be indispensable, the jobber does not always appear so; and we find a great

many manufacturers saying to him: "We will accept your orders and give you a commission on them, but we will not protect you. That is, we will compete with you in your own field and take the orders direct if we can."

But to declare war upon the jobber, even in this era, is a grave step. Many a concern would find such a course one of doubtful wisdom. The jobber carries the credit burden, and many a retailer prefers to have as many of his articles come thru his jobber as possible, in order to save on transportation charges and to escape the annoyance of having several accounts.

Elimination of the jobber requires ample and convenient warehouses with delivery facilities. It is rarely attempted until the prestige of the product with the consumer is such that the jobber's possible hostility can no longer injure distribution.

Proper Preparation Vital

The task of properly advertising an article of merchandise nationally is something like Oliver Wendell Holmes' conception of the production of a gentleman, which, he said, must begin with his great-great-grandfather. Advertising should be pretty well along toward completion before it begins!

It is important fully to recognize this fact, for many so-called advertising failures have been due to lack of preparation for the advertising rather than to any material defects in the advertising itself.

Good copy is all very well, and a wise selection of

mediums is important, but the most important thing of all is a plan based upon a knowledge of all the conditions and including a thoro shaping of the business beforehand for the particular advertising which it is to receive.

Finances should be so arranged that the advertising may be continued on the plan laid out, and not be interrupted at a critical moment for want of funds. Advertising a product is like pushing a car up a hill. You must keep pushing until you get it to the top. If you take the propelling force from behind it too soon, it will quickly roll back to the bottom and you have to begin all over again. All the previous expenditure of effort will have been wasted. Once you get it over the critical point, the pushing gets easier. It will be found true of merchandising as of mechanics, that it takes less power to keep a moving body going than it does to start it.

Besides proper financing, adequate manufacturing resources must be provided. Even old established businesses suffer sometimes because the demand created by advertising cannot be properly met by the factory. This is serious, not only because of the lost opportunity (the loss of the immediate sale) but also because a direct opening has been created for a competitor who otherwise might not have become established. Many an enterprising concern has sold its first bill of merchandise to a loyal customer of another house by being able to supply what was wanted when the older concern could not deliver the goods. Having secured a trial of its product, the

new concern often holds at least a part of the business, and to an alert and able company an entering wedge means ultimate success.

Facilities for handling the inquiries brought by the advertising should be carefully provided beforehand. This involves several things. In the first place, inquiries may come direct to the advertiser by mail. They may be orders or they may be requests for prices, for the names of local dealers where the goods may be bought, or for more details about the product itself.

These direct inquiries should be fully anticipated and a plan for handling them decided upon. Nothing so chokes the tender shoots of public interest in an advertised product as neglect. Burning up greenbacks or sinking coin of the realm in the sea is not a more foolish pastime than spending $50,000 in newspaper or magazine space to arouse an interest in a product, only to ignore and neglect it when it has been aroused.

Yet this business crime is being committed constantly. Sometimes the excuse is "we haven't help enough to take care of them," which really is no excuse at all. More often there is no recognition of the importance of this part of the work. That there is anything to advertising but the printing of advertisements, is not even dreamed by many who attempt this apparently easy road to increased sales.

I shall have more to say later and in its proper place about the importance of the follow-up. I wish here simply to emphasize the necessity of planning for this

important feature of the advertising campaign and of providing the machinery for it, even before copy or mediums are decided upon.

Getting the Product Right

One of the important items of preparation in a campaign for marketing a product by national advertising is the preparation of the product itself for the role it is to play. With some concerns, possessing a varied line, this means no more than the selection of the proper individual product of the family, or perhaps a small group of products, out of the entire line. H. J. Heinz Company, for example, has found it profitable to advertise specifically a certain few of its varieties, and the advertising of these few carries the whole line. One of the most profitable products—one which shows up large in annual sales—is never even mentioned in the advertising, because it is considered not quite so alluring, not quite so susceptible of word-painting as some of the others. Have you ever seen a magazine advertisement of Heinz' sauer-kraut? Not likely. Yet tons of that excellent variety are sold yearly by means of the advertising of Heinz preserves, Heinz pickles, etc.

Huyler's, Park & Tilford's and other high-class confectionery manufacturers who advertise, say nothing as a rule about anything but chocolates and bonbons, yet practically all make a full line of candies,

and their so-called hard candies have a large sale, as have also miscellaneous other varieties that appeal to the sweet-tooth.

Uneeda Biscuit, Nabisco, Zu-Zu, and possibly one or two others, are well-known, advertised products of National Biscuit Company, yet the advertised varieties are only a few drops in the big bucket of that big concern's line of goods.

But the effectiveness of the principle is not confined to different varieties of the same class of merchandise. The Beechnut Packing Company is marketing chewing gum on the strength of the prestige flowing from its food-product advertising. The National Lead Company devotes probably ninety to ninety-five per cent of its advertising expenditure to popularizing and explaining Dutch Boy white lead, but its other products benefit by the advertising and this notwithstanding the fact that the other products, such as babbitt metals, solders, printer's metals, linseed oil, sheet lead, lead pipe, lead ornaments for stained glass, etc., are sold to and are used by widely differing industries.

The principle involved is simple. The manufacturer first builds a reputation for the trade-mark, or for the name of the house, thru the advertising of one or two products, coupled with the satisfaction which those products give to the public. The esteem in which the public holds the satisfactory article is transferred by a perfectly natural mental process, to the house which makes the article, and this esteem we know as "good-will." By an exactly similar

process, the good-will which the house now enjoys can be transferred to another product by the simple expedient of putting the name of the manufacturer or his well-known trade-mark upon the new article.

Naturally, it is easier to make this transference if the advertised article and the other articles of the house are of the same type, as in the case of the food-product or the confectionery manufacturers. The reason is two-fold: First, the articles of the same type are consumed by the same class of people and sold in the same stores. Therefore, there is no doubt that the consumer of the first will recognize the name and trade-mark when he sees it on other products. In the second place, if the two articles are of the same type, no doubt can enter as to the ability of the manufacturer of the first also to make the second.

On neither of these points can one be so sure when the two articles of merchandise are of widely divergent uses. Thus, a doctor or a merchant might be perfectly familiar with white lead for painting his house, but might never have any use for a babbitt metal for the bearing of a machine; and, conversely, a man might be very familiar with a certain concern's babbitt metal without ever going into a store where paint is sold. The fact, therefore, that a certain trade-mark is well known to the buyer of white lead as designating a superior product, gives no prestige to the same mark on an ingot of babbitt metal, if the buyer of the latter is *another person.*

In the same way, one might easily argue that because a certain concern has proved itself very skilful

and capable in the manufacture of white lead, it does not follow that it could also make a superior babbitt metal; the two products being so entirely different, both in the process of manufacture and in the use to be made of the finished product. Nevertheless, the transfer of good-will, first from an esteemed product to the manufacturer thereof, and thence to another product made by the same manufacturer, often takes place even tho the two products are entirely different. This magic is wrought by advertising.

The ignorance of the buyer of one product with regard to the existence of the other product is overcome by the advertising. Thus, the user of the babbitt metal might never learn through *use* of the prestige which the white lead holds, but when he sees it advertised continuously and in connection with a certain trade-mark and over a certain name, he unconsciously places that name and trade-mark in his mental hall of fame. When he sees the same name and trade-mark on a babbitt metal he is at once prejudiced in favor of the metal. In some cases he may not know why; in others he reasons it out thus: "This babbitt is evidently made by a big, reliable and capable house. I'll give it a trial."

It is true that the effort to transfer prestige in the manner described is not always successful, but where it fails I believe there is always a more or less easily discoverable reason. I am told that the makers of an excellent and well-known meat sauce have given up as impracticable the sale of fruit jams and jellies on the strength of the sauce's trade-mark. If so, I am not

surprised. I doubt if the name of the concern in question is very deeply impressed upon the public's mind. Indeed it is my belief that if the question were asked: "Who makes Worcester Sauce?" another concern rather than the right one would be named by a big majority of those who could name any at all. This manufacturer has never made his trade-mark name a household word. Therefore it has no power to sell a new product.

One more consideration and we shall leave this interesting phase of our subject. The name or mark by which we attempt to transfer prestige to a new or unadvertised member of the family must be one which will be *absolutely sure to establish the connection.*

If the trade-mark or name already stands clearly for the *company* in the public mind, the thing is easy —as in the case of Heinz and the pickle trade-mark. But if the prestige has been built for a certain *product's* brand name, then look out! There may be danger of a slip-up in the plan.

This is especially so if the brand name of that product is not distinctive. For example: "Beechnut" bacon is a very distinctive name and the appearance of a "Beechnut" jelly is immediately associated with the previously known bacon; but not so with a much and variously used trade name like "Eagle" or "Phoenix" or "Arrow" or "Boston." Who, for instance, upon hearing of a "Boston" collar would connect it in any way with the makers of the excellent garter of that name? Conversely, who would think that an "Arrow" garter must surely be made by

Cluett & Peabody, because the latter make Arrow collars?

The danger of failure to establish the connection grows less the nearer alike the articles are and increases as the articles diverge in character.

In concluding this discussion the whole thing may be summed up thus: Be sure that the prestige for the popular advertised *article* is transferred to the *house* that makes it; that done, the prestige can in most cases be passed on to other articles of the same manufacture by proper labeling.

Sometimes there are several grades of a product and it must be decided beforehand which of these is to be pushed in the advertising. Will the constant exploiting of the highest-priced grade give such tone and prestige to the house that the lower grades will sell of themselves because they have that well-known name on them? Or will it be better to find that medium grade which will be preferred by the large, solid, middle class, and make it the purpose of all advertising efforts, direct and indirect, to increase the sale of that grade?

The problem of the house with but a single product is similar, though it presents itself in a somewhat different guise. The product may be capable of being manufactured to suit different ideas and different purses. Take soap, for example. Shall we make a good, plain soap at a low price or one with frills and fragrance at a good, stiff one? On the decision depends the style of advertising to be used and in many cases the whole marketing plan.

In some instances the product itself needs no change in order to make it perfectly suitable for the proposed marketing by national advertising; but perhaps the name isn't right. The wise Solomon must have been a good advertising man along with his other manifold accomplishments, for he said: "A good *name* is rather to be chosen than great riches." He was right; yet even at this late date many advertisers haven't learned the lesson.

The name of a product has just two functions: First, it is a handle for the mind to take hold of and should be characteristic enough to stick out in full view whenever the memory wants to take hold of it. Second, it is the means of letting the dealer know what the buyer wants. For the latter purpose it should be easy to pronounce.

What unnecessary brakes business concerns do place upon their progress when they choose names for their products which a goodly portion of their prospective customers cannot pronounce! Bon Ami, Eclat, Djer Kiss, Bel Bon and other foreign names put a handicap on the goods. By force of much expenditure and clever advertising they occasionally overcome the handicap, just as machinery often runs and does its work without proper lubrication; but why make it do so when the friction can be eliminated? Whenever you see the parenthetic remark ("pronounced so and so") after a trade name, you are looking at an unconscious admission of a costly

business error. No person likes to "make a break" in pronunciation before strangers. If he doesn't know how to pronounce the name of the thing he would like to have, he will ask for another brand with a plain name that he can pronounce, rather than run the risk of being pitied by the superior young thing behind the counter.

Form and Container

The form in which the article is sold is important. This is not strictly an advertising consideration, for if the form or the package is not right, the public will be reluctant to accept it, no matter whether offered thru advertising or thru other sales methods. But these little things have to be looked after more carefully upon undertaking an expensive advertising campaign for a greatly increased market, because there is more at stake. A loose nut may be nothing much to worry over on a slow-moving donkey cart, but there is almost sure disaster of big proportions ahead if every little thing about a sixty-horse-power motor car is not kept snug and tight and working perfectly.

Bars of soap that fit the hand may be preferred to those which do not; five-cent packages of washing powder may just strike the housekeeper's fancy when a ten-cent package would not "go"; workmen may refuse bars of solder weighing more than a pound; men who shave themselves may be ripe for a shaving paste instead of a cake or stick of soap. So also an attractive bottle or pasteboard box may be as big

a factor in the success of a food product or toilet article as the excellence of the product itself.

Do not become obligated for a big advertising expenditure until the pulse of the public has been felt as to its preferences in the form of the product nor until someone who knows what is good in packages has O.K.'d the old containers or has provided new ones.

Improving the Trade-mark

Trade-marks in some cases should be rearranged; in other cases they should be materially changed, and in still other cases they should be abandoned for something better. As a rule, however, trade-marks on established merchandise are too valuable to sacrifice. Unless there is some vital defect, they should be retained, for even an inartistic design, if well and favorably known, is better than a superior piece of the draughtsman's art which has no significance to buyers of that particular class of merchandise.

Illegible lettering or crudities in drawing which could be improved without destroying the identity of the mark or of its ownership, justify slight rearrangement or smoothing up. An exceedingly complicated trade-mark may often be improved by picking out the predominating feature, then gradually fading the other details out until only the significant part remains. H. J. Heinz Company used to have a very complicated trade-mark consisting of a circular border with dates and the company name, in which

appeared a keystone, across the face of which (for fear you wouldn't "get" the keystone idea) was a door key. Below was a cucumber pickle. Examine a jar of Heinz preserves or ketchup today. You will find the only relic of the old trade-mark is the little green pickle on a keystone-shaped label! The new is immeasurably better.

Finally, a most interesting case of entirely changing a trade-mark is that of Sherwin-Williams Company, the paint manufacturers. At one time their trade-mark was a chameleon, probably in subtle allusion to the many colors which the lizard and their line of paints exhibit. It so happened, however, that an advertising design, showing an upturned paint can with its contents "covering the earth," became much better known to the public, and the company wisely adopted the newer design as a trade-mark for the goods.

Coordination of the Parts

The marketing of an advertised product involves just as much attention to the details of selling and distribution as if no help were expected from the advertising. Salesmen, especially old-time travelers for old-time houses, sometimes get the idea that national advertising is intended to minimize the value of salesmen and, in its ultimate development, to do away with them altogether.

This is a totally erroneous view, and springs from ignorance of the purpose of advertising, an ignorance, however, which to these salesmen takes on the sem-

blance of truth all the more because of the ridiculous claims which some advertising men make for advertising.

The truth is, as I have had occasion to point out at length elsewhere (*Printers' Ink*, April 23, 1914), that advertising in a vast majority of cases is only the handmaiden of personal salesmanship, a means whereby at a low cost the good salesman can greatly multiply his effectiveness.

The accrediting of exaggerated powers to advertising has done another mischief besides ruffling the temper of a sensitive salesman and robbing advertising of his hearty cooperation. Indeed this second harm is now more serious than the first, because the salesman's suspicion of advertising is rapidly on the wane. The second injury is inflicted by the management and springs from a like ignorance of the real function of this modern help in marketing. Too many concerns which ought to know better embark on the expenditure of large sums for advertising with never a thought that there is anything more to advertising than the printing of some good advertisements.

Such advertisers seem to look upon advertising as a new mysterious kind of reaping machine which if set down in a barren field will immediately, in some black-art manner, begin to harvest ripened grain where no seed was sown, and bring it home to be added to that which has been harvested in the good old way of ploughing, sowing, fertilizing, cultivating and reaping!

Advertising is more like a new and improved com-

bined plow and seeding machine which puts more land under cultivation and starts additional crops to growing, but which must be used along with the regular and established activities of the business. Wo to the concern which adds a new and efficient plow and seeder and makes no plans to cultivate, to hoe and weed, to coax and water, and finally to harvest the crop!

I have heretofore spoken of the necessity of planning follow-up literature or other collateral effort. I now call attention to the necessity of coordinating the sales department's efforts with the advertising.

First, the knowledge which the salesmen and sales-manager have of conditions and of the likes and dislikes of the trade, and, so far as they know it, the attitude of the public, should be used by the advertising department. I must say, however, that salesmen are seldom good information-getters. Their faces are too close to their own daily problems to get a perspective. Salesmen's reports should therefore be checked and elaborated by means of outside observations.

Second, while it is impossible always to submit advertising copy to the salesmen, general ideas about the advertising should be placed before them whenever possible.

Third, salesmen should always be informed as to what copy is to appear, when and in what periodicals. There are many reasons for this. They should know what is being done so that they may exercise team work in pushing on the same goods, or on the same

sales argument that is being exploited in the current advertising. Another consideration is that it is humiliating to any loyal salesman to receive from an outsider his first news of a move made by his company. It makes him feel like an outsider himself to have a dealer say: "That's a good idea in your company's last advertisement," when he hasn't the least conception of what that idea is. It is an enthusiasm killer to be treated by his house as tho he were of so little importance.

More important still, if possible, is the positive promotion work which a salesman can do if armed with advance proofs of advertisements and with information as to how they are to be used. This is especially true when the product he is selling is a well-known staple about which it is exceedingly difficult to say anything new. I know successful salesmen of such goods who occupy most of their time exciting the enthusiasm of dealers over promotion work the company is doing. They exhibit tangible evidence that their company is creating business for the dealer and every new effort of the advertising department is eagerly seized upon as a means of injecting new life, new interest and new effectiveness into the daily routine of the salesman's work.

Advertising Plan

I have emphasized the necessity of preparing all departments of a business to cooperate with the advertising—the coordination of all the parts of a business with the advertising presupposes a definite

plan for the advertising itself. Yet many an advertising campaign is carried on without a plan. At any rate many a series of advertisements are strung along thru a period of time, without the semblance of a plan. But such a sequence of advertisements is not really an advertising campaign.

An advertising plan must not be too broad or general in its objective. That is, a series of disconnected advertisements having no more specific object than to "promote the business" or to "keep the advertiser's name before the public" could not be considered a campaign with a plan, since this requires that there be a certain unity about them, arising from an attempt either to induce the public to do a certain thing or to create a specific impression on the public mind.

Thus, a food product manufacturer might institute an advertising campaign covering say, two months, the object of which would be to put at least one selected variety of his products in every grocery store, leaving all other considerations of his business to be taken care of later or by the general momentum of the business. If all the advertisements were written and the follow-ups planned to further that specific object, the campaign would have the force and concentration of a plan.

An ammunition manufacturer adopted as a plan the idea of giving away three shot-shells free to any person who presented the advertisement coupon to his local dealer. The object was two-fold: First, to cause an inquiry at the store; second, to induce the

shooter to try the shells and prove certain claims of superiority. This was a plan, and all advertisements of every character were made to concentrate on the "three-shells-free" idea.

The plan, however, may consist only in the similarity of subject matter and treatment of a series of advertisements, all carefully prepared with a view to producing a certain definite, pointed impression upon the public mind.

The Victor Talking Machine Company's series of advertisements featuring first one great singer's records and then another's, were all a part of a definite plan to impress an important double fact: First, Victor records are worthy of the consideration of the highest class of artists; second, if you want to hear these great artists, Victor records are the only means whereby you can gratify that desire. A single advertisement stating these facts would not have "put over" that impression, but a well planned campaign did.

One more illustration of the importance of plan: The makers of a popular piano player had been writing their advertisements on the plan of creating a knowledge of the pleasure that could be brought into the home by the piano player. Little was said about the merit of their player in particular. All the advertisements rang the changes on the one theme—the piano player affords a new source of pleasure and culture.

After working for months and even for years on this plan, with great success, the advertisers came to

believe that such advertising helped their competitors just as much as it benefited themselves, and they decided then to adopt an advertising plan of a more competitive nature.

The new advertisements played up the superior points of their own piano player, but tho they were good advertisements of their kind, the sales fell off! In a few months the manufacturers returned to their old plan, whereupon sales began to increase again. In each case there was a plan, but one proved better than the other.

Copy

I shall have little to say about advertising copy. I pass it, not because of its unimportance but on the contrary because its importance is so obvious that every text-book treats of it, and to discuss it properly would require a whole volume, not merely a section of a lecture.

Copy should be written by some one who understands the people who are to be influenced. That is why few presidents, general managers, etc., are capable of writing good copy—their own occasional beliefs to the contrary notwithstanding. If the copy-writer also learns the goods and the business thoroly, it is no handicap, but to understand people is much more important. Consequently, it is quite possible for advertising agencies to write better copy than any one in the advertiser's own organization, unless a special copy department is maintained by the adver-

tiser; and it is for this reason that service agencies have been so successful.

On the other hand it is not an ideal condition for the *management* of the advertising to be in the hands of an outside organization. As I have shown, there is much more to advertising than the printed advertisements, and a person should be in command who knows both the public and the business. Such a manager uses the outside experts merely as assistants and counsellors.

Copy should not be written until the company's plan—as previously described—has been fully decided upon, and should be an expression of that plan. I have known advertisements to be simply strung together without thought of their bearing on one another or their suitability to the purpose of the campaign. A so-called "clever" idea is adopted as one advertisement. Next month another idea is submitted by some outsider without the slightest notion as to what the advertiser is trying to accomplish, and it is purchased. Such advertising is like trying to kill a deer by shooting into a thicket in any direction, upon the theory that game may be hidden there; or like trying to build a house by throwing a brick here and another there, instead of placing one upon another with mortar between.

It is not necessary that advertisements be made into an obvious series and labeled 1, 2, 3, etc. Indeed that might be done and still the real vital connection be absent. What is desirable is that the manager shall see the connection himself—that he shall have a

distinct purpose in his campaign and that he build his advertisements with a clear idea as to how each one is going to push the campaign a little nearer to the goal.

A prominent mattress advertiser claims that his mattresses are built, not stuffed. Too many advertising campaigns are simply *stuffed* with copy. They should be built.

Following Up Inquiries

In my opinion most advertising copy, even for those concerns that sell thru the trade, should be so written as to provoke direct inquiries. Not that I think that the inquiries are of equal value to all businesses. To some they may be of little direct benefit. But if the advertiser forms the habit of appealing to his public in an intimate manner, if in his copy he tries hard to get the reader so interested that he will ask the advertiser a question or a favor, a cordiality is apt to creep into the copy which is much more potent than the coldly impersonal style of much of the so-called "general publicity" copy. Besides, it is an excellent thing for a manufacturer to come into contact with the consumers. It acts as a corrective to his point of view.

If, then, the advertising is planned to bring inquiries, no matter from what motive, those letters of inquiry must be given attention. More than that, they should be given such prompt and careful attention as will impress the inquirer with the advertiser's

enterprise, sincerity, earnestness and desire to be of real service to prospective buyers.

Replies to inquiries should be intelligently made. Form letters may be safely used when the inquiry is of a routine nature, such as, "Please send me the booklet mentioned in the September magazines," but if an inquirer also asks for prices, or for some specific information as to how the advertiser's product can be made to apply in a particular case, it is a business error of the worst kind to reply with a general letter which touches only vaguely, if at all, upon the subject of the inquiry.

Heated discussions arise from time to time as to whether letters duplicated in great numbers by mechanical means to simulate a single, typewritten letter are legitimate and honest in their nature; also as to whether such letters are effective. To my notion, the mechanical method of producing the letter, or whether it is written once or a thousand times, is entirely beside the mark. The real crux is, does the letter contain what the reader will be interested to know?

If a person has asked a specific question and receives a specific answer, he does not care whether the letter is hand-written, typewritten or printed. But if he receives a blunderbuss essay on the subject, leaving his question unanswered, he will not be pleased, and the fact that the essay has "Dear Mr. Brown" filled in at the top, no matter how neatly, will not save the communication from consignment to the waste-paper basket nor its sender from consignment to the lower regions.

Shall we follow up an inquiry once, twice, or five times? is a question frequently asked by advertising men. No uniform answer could possibly be made. It depends both on the specific proposition and on the nature or habits of the people who make up the advertiser's prospective purchasers. A mail-order proposition would, as a general thing, justify a longer-drawn-out follow-up than a sold-thru-dealer product, because when the mail-order correspondent ceases his efforts, communication with the prospect is practically cut, and the effort is a closed incident; but the advertiser of an article sold thru the trade still has his goods on view in the stores, he has his signs there and every one of his subsequent periodical advertisements is a reminder to the prospect that the product can be easily had by stepping into the near-by shop.

Again, even mail-order houses find that their practice must vary with conditions. One big concern in New York has found that in New England the returns from a fifth letter to prospects regularly brings enough returns to pay for the effort, while in certain sections of the West they never send more than four. They have found by careful observation that these western prospects act with somewhat less deliberation, and that if they order at all, they do so within the period of four reminders.

Shall follow-up letters be long or short? This is a question which is fought over so often that one should think it would eventually be settled one way or the other thru the exhaustion of all parties, if for no

other reason. As a matter of fact, it is one of those questions which cannot be answered categorically. Some letters undoubtedly should be long and others should be short. I have known five and six-page letters to sell lots of goods, while many a page letter has sold nothing but its composer. It was not because they covered much paper that the long ones succeeded, nor did the short ones fail because they were too light on the postage scales. The long ones succeeded because they told the prospective buyer of the goods they described just what he wanted to know. The reader never considered them too long. The short ones failed because they were unimportant if true. Mere lengthening of the same letters would have done no good; but better letters in their places, perhaps longer, perhaps shorter, would have scored greater success.

Don't confuse brevity and conciseness. The latter is always desirable, the former not necessarily so. Even a short letter is not concise if it uses twice as many words as necessary to carry its little message, while a three-page letter may have all the essentials of conciseness. All it needs to qualify in the concise class is to use no word which does not add a thought or bring up a new and desirable mental picture.

For the sake of easy reading, it may be well to present a necessarily long message in a more attractive form than a letter. For myself I much prefer to read a clearly printed folder or pamphlet than a mass of typewritten words. I believe most people find the printed sheet more comfortable. A good

plan, therefore, is to press-print all or the greater part of the message, leaving to the typewritten letter, if that form is used, the bare duty of persuasively calling attention to the booklet or folder.

Advertisers used to think that there was nothing like the letter form to ensure a reading of the advertiser's message. That fetish is exploded. Advertisers who really test such questions and who do not rely simply on their personal beliefs, are finding that the form does not count for much. Any method that will catch the attention, even momentarily, and that is backed up by interest-compelling contents, will do the work.

I made a comparative test some time ago of the filled-in facsimile letter, the unfilled-in facsimile letter and the printed circular. Each contained exactly the same message. Each was sent to the same number (2,000) of similar prospects. The two in letter form (one filled-in and the other not) brought practically the same percentage of replies. The printed circular, so far from falling behind the letters in results, beat them both by a substantial amount. The reason was undoubtedly that the printed matter was so much more welcome to the eye and gave me a better opportunity to display the alluring parts of the message.

Mediums

Advertising, from one viewpoint, may be roughly divided into two great classes; first, that which offers a specific article or unit of merchandise for immediate

purchase, and second, that which is designed to induce a habit. Of the first class may be cited the retailer's daily offering of a certain line of merchandise, with or without prices, but at least bending every effort to sell the goods at once. So also the mail order advertiser's offering of a specific article at a certain price, in which all the advertiser's effort is expended on making that sale.

The second class is represented by the publicity of that vast number of manufacturers whose advertising devotes itself to educating the public as to the excellence and desirability of the product, leaving to retailers the function of selling the goods.

The first sort says: "Complete line of Stein-Bloch suits just received. Call today and let us fit you out." The second kind says: "Wear Stein-Bloch clothes. They mark the well dressed man." The classification is important because of its bearing upon the choice of mediums, even for the advertising of a nationally advertised product.

If sales are made thru the trade, monthly magazines, and even national weeklies are poorly adapted to the first class of advertising. They are not close enough to the retailer. They are not adaptable enough to the local conditions which change with each community. Local newspapers are ideal for this purpose. If, on the other hand, the sales machinery is controlled by one organization, as in the mail-order business, the national periodical is well adapted to making specific sales.

Newpapers, it is true, are constantly used by ad-

vertisers for purely habit-forming purposes—educational advertising, we often call it—and it is undoubtedly effective, but in my opinion the newspaper cannot be so effective for this kind of advertising as the literary periodical.

People do not look thru the advertising sections of a newspaper in the same way that they peruse those sections in a magazine. Some think it is because the better grade of paper stock used by the magazine makes a more attractive advertising section possible. That may have something to do with it. I am inclined to believe, however, that the predominating cause lies deeper. We read a newspaper for current, up-to-the-minute news. We do not as a rule look to the newspaper for our fiction, for our entertainment, or for our leisurely enjoyed discussions of art, religion or science. Influenced by an unconscious analogy, we look to the newspaper's advertising columns for the day's offerings, and turn to our more carefully and deliberately compiled periodicals for information as to what is what in apparel, in food products, in home furnishings, in labor-saving devices and in luxuries of all kinds.

The newspaper, however, can lay claim to consideration as an educational medium, despite the handicap just described, when it comes to the exploitation of a product of almost universal use, for the simple reason that it is more of a medium for the masses than the national weekly or the monthly magazine. Where the magazine-reading public in a community may be a few thousand, the newspaper readers are likely to

number a hundred thousand. To reach all the people, newspapers must be used.

When the newspaper is used for general educational purposes, the copy should be very attractively set and preferred position used. Readers may persistently hunt the advertisement of John Wanamaker to see what he is offering today, but they will not, to any great extent, plod thru the unattractive newspaper advertising pages on aimless pleasure bent.

These two—the newspaper and the magazine—are today the great primary advertising mediums. There are many minor ones, some of them excellent for limited purposes; others worthless at any time. Posters, painted bulletins and street-car signs are the most conspicuous examples of the secondary mediums. They are seldom used for educational purposes because of their limitations. A poster or painted bulletin is read at a glance, and the message must therefore be short enough to be grasped at a glance. The street-car card is not quite so limited and could be used much more than it is for laying the foundation of knowledge and belief in merchandise.

The peculiar function of the sign and poster is to remind one of previous knowledge, previous impressions. This is an important duty and naturally such advertising is most useful when located near the place where the article advertised may be bought.

An objection to bulletin and poster advertising is the offense it gives to people of taste and culture both on account of the generally inartistic nature of the posters and signs themselves and because of the

unrestricted preemption of locations in beautiful residence districts and places of scenic beauty. Unfortunately (or fortunately, according to the way one looks at it) there are more people at present who are indifferent to this consideration than there are who actively resent the violation of the public's right to enjoy the beauty of the great outdoors. For the moment, therefore, this class of advertising is undoubtedly effective. The feeling against it is growing, however, and the day will come when it will be either restricted to a reasonable status, when it should be more effective than ever, or wiped out altogether, to the loss of all concerned.

Class publications may be made useful to most advertisers, and to some they often take rank as primary mediums. In the sense I use the term, a class publication is one which is devoted in its editorial contents to those people who are interested in a certain business, profession or hobby. The best of these publications confine their advertising strictly to the same subject matter as the reading columns. For example, the engineering magazines treat only of engineering problems, solicit as subscribers only engineers or those who have engineering interests, and accept advertisements only for such materials, machinery and services as engineers would use. The field for a class publication may be even further subdivided. Thus one publisher may edit an automobile magazine in the interest of the automobile user, while another magazine may be edited for the information of the automobile manufacturer.

It is evident, therefore, that if the merchandising problem is one which has special reference to a certain class, the publication which appeals to that class can be profitably used, not only because of the minimum of waste, but also because of the greater authority with which the message goes to the reader. A man might think no more of a cravat or a collar because he saw it advertised in a machinery paper, but he undoubtedly would attach special weight to the advertisement of a lathe in such a publication.

For the first of these reasons—possibly for both—a higher rate may economically be paid in a class publication, and the advertiser generally has that privilege.

At the present time the best class publications are on a par in every way with the best publications of miscellaneous circulation, but there are undoubtedly many parasites which must be avoided. There are probably more "sleepers" among class periodicals, proportionately, than among the general publications, because it requires but little capital to start a class journal big enough to make a "bluff," and the majority of advertisers in these small publications are not well informed about advertising methods, standards and values. They are, therefore, easily fooled into supporting worthless mediums.

My suggestion is to take on a class publication only after the same rigid investigation which one would give a general publication, and to judge its value by the same standard.

Mail pieces are most frequently used as a means of

follow-up; tho often they are the principal or even the only mediums used. When used as the primary or initial medium, there are several essential differences to be borne in mind between the direct-by-mail advertising and periodical or outdoor display.

The first is the selected character of the mailing list. The advertiser can send his advertising to whomever he pleases and ignore whomever he wishes.

The second is the exclusiveness of his announcement. If he gets the recipient's attention, he has a monopoly of it for the moment.

Third, he can print what he has to say without restrictions as to color, shape or size.

All these considerations have their advantages and will intimate to the wise advertiser the desirability of molding his copy to fit the conditions.

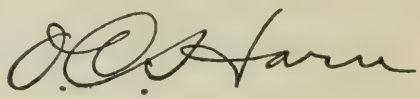
On the other hand there are disadvantages. The most important is the item of greater cost, if the list is large. A good periodical will carry the message much more cheaply. The second is the lack of that outside or collateral authority or influence which the periodical of standing unconsciously gives.

Mail pieces when used as a primary medium generally consist of facsimile letters, cards and folders, and private company periodical publications. The latter are usually—and rather unhappily—called "house-organs." They sometimes carry other advertising besides that of the manufacturer publishing them, but in my opinion much of the advantage of such a publication is thereby lost.

There are of course many miscellaneous mediums

of advertising used, such as entertainment programs and novelties of all kinds. These scarcely deserve consideration, for except in isolated cases they are practically worthless.

To sum up, the marketing of a nationally advertised product requires close attention to all those details which must engage the mind of any manufacturer who attempts to sell his output himself. It demands something more. Not only must the ordinary machinery of a sales department be provided, but just as a bridge must be strengthened if vehicles of greater weight and speed are to be driven over it, so must the whole producing and marketing machinery be strengthened for the high duty required by the new conditions imposed by the advertising. Delays, disappointments and inadequate service may fail to alienate patrons who have dealt with the house for years and who value the concern for its other virtues, but when a campaign of expansion is launched by means of advertising, there must be no slip in any cog.



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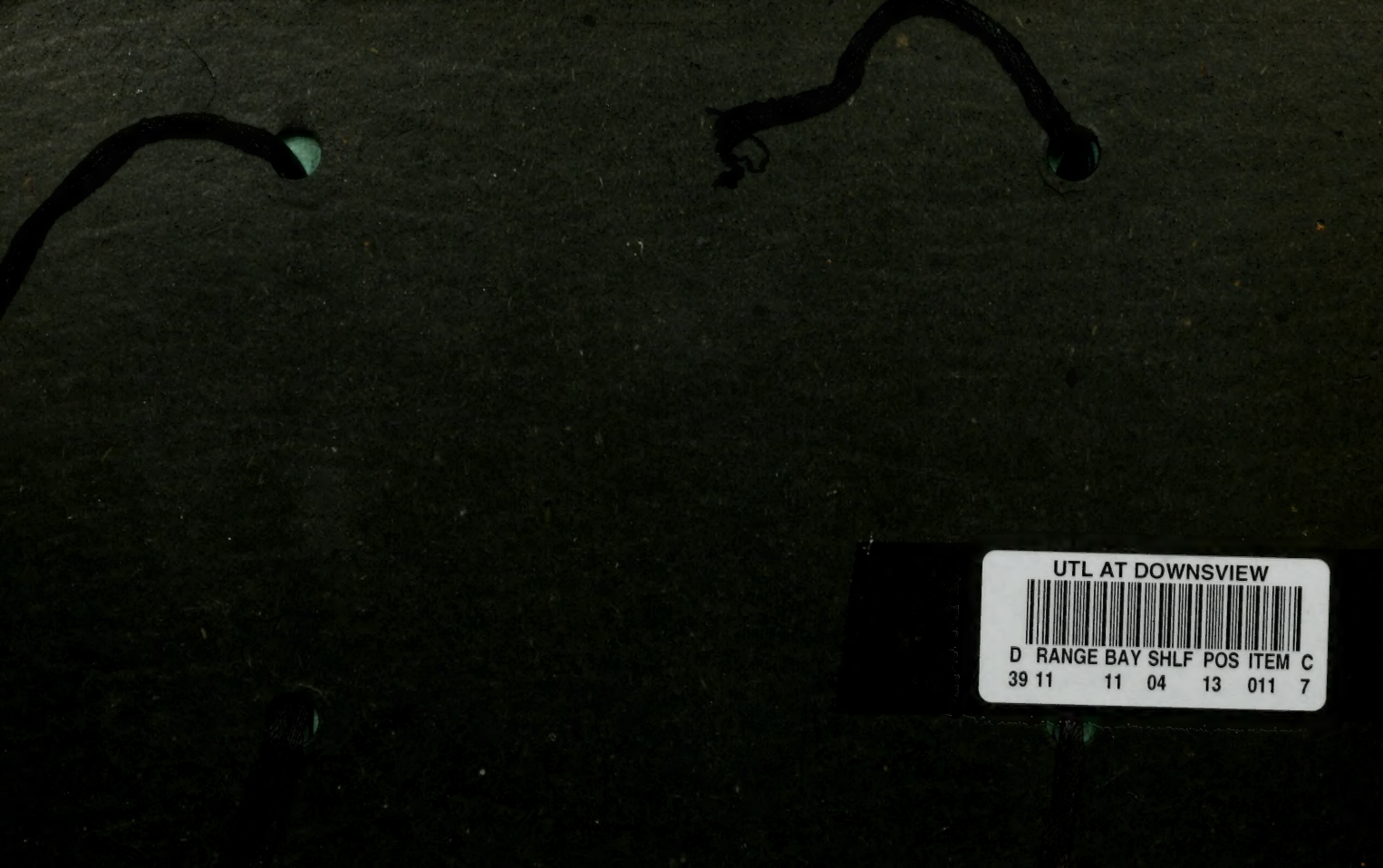
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